



The Wade Hampton Oak stands unyielding to Main Street traffic.

# Conway

for the By Joquita Burka day.



If you travel regularly to one of the country's most popular beaches—Myrtle Beach—you may have hurled down Highway 501, intent on sunfunbeachgolfparty without a thought for what lies just west of the Waccamaw River.

What a pity. You may have missed the charming city of Conway.

Founded in 1732, Conway calls itself South Carolina's Rivertown. Stretching along the blackwaters of the Waccamaw River, the town has learned to make the most of its location. Inviting restaurants, boutiques, antique shops and working artists' studios line the downtown streets. Pick up maps at the Visitor's Center for walking or driving tours. Grab a bite at a number of delicious restaurants, including the Conway institution known as Ocean Fish Market, where you can choose your fish and have it fried up into a crispy sandwich in minutes. And for dessert, try the scrumptious cakes and cookies at The Trestle Bakery.

Perhaps the most tranquil feature of the town is the Riverwalk. Here you can amble peacefully and allow yourself to imagine the time when this prosperous trade route was lined with handsome plantations smiling down from the river bluffs.

But I've saved what might be one of Conway's most unique features for last.

Named a Tree City USA for 22 consecutive years, Conway adores its ancient, low-hanging, Spanish moss-covered live oak trees. According to Bridgett Johnson, executive vice president of the Conway Chamber of Commerce, "Everyone around here calls them Conway's oldest living residents. Literally we pave the roads around them. One of the more famous ones is the Mary Beaty tree. Legend has it that when men came to cut down the tree, Mary stood on the front porch with a shotgun and threatened them."

It must have worked, because the tree still stands and so does Conway. What's not to love about a city that values its history, its river—and its trees—that much?



The old Horry County Courthouse was designed by Robert Mills, architect of the Washington Monument.



On ice one minute. On your plate the next. Yes, the fish is fresh at Ocean Fish Market.



The Riverwalk along the Waccamaw River is popular with locals as well as guests.

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